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## The Enoch Pratt Free Library

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## The Enoch Pratt Free Library

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### Abstract

A brief history of the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, Maryland.

THE ENOCH PRATT FREE LIBRARY

Ruth A. Allen  
35: 110  
July 19, 1972

Enoch Pratt was described by George Peabody as "one of the ablest financiers I have ever known," yet he believed that those with great fortunes had a responsibility to the masses who had little or no opportunity for education.

When he said "My library shall be for all, rich and poor, without distinction of race and color" he summed up his conclusions of fifteen years of study of the library question and of the problem of applying his wealth to the advantage of the greatest number of his fellow townsmen.

The success of a free circulating library service to mechanics and skilled laborers undoubtedly influenced Enoch Pratt. Its limited scope of services and its remoteness from many who would have made use of its collection was evidence of the need for city-wide services.<sup>1</sup>

Ground had already been broken in January of 1882, when Pratt addressed a letter to the city council stating his intent to build a central building and four branches for a public free circulating library, and formally offering the buildings and an endowment of \$833,333.33 to the city of Baltimore. The city council accepted his offer and the State Legislature approved an annual income of \$50,000 to the Library from the investment of the endowment fund.<sup>2</sup>

The two-story white marble library, "covered with florid decoration," was generally representative of nineteenth century libraries. It had a closed stack arrangement, a delivery room near the entrance, and a smaller adjoining room to register borrowers and return books. A huge stairway led to the second floor where the public reading room and offices were located.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Luther H. Evans, "The First Fifty Years, the Enoch Pratt Free Library: An Appreciation," Library Journal, 71:230, April 1, 1970.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 230-1.

<sup>3</sup>Philip Arthur Kalish, "The Enoch Pratt Free Library: A Social History," (Metuchen, New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, 1969), p. 62-3.

In 1884, Dr. Lewis Henry Steiner, a distinguished physician and scholar, was appointed the first librarian; and in 1886 the central building of the Enoch Pratt Free Library with its 32,000 volumes welcomed its first borrower. Within eight weeks the four branch libraries were also opened to the public. In its first year the Pratt Library with a staff of forty assistants and a payroll of \$2455.50 recorded a total circulation of 410,215 volumes to 26,000 patrons.<sup>4</sup>

Steiner made a special effort to put a wide variety of books at the disposal of the patrons, excluding only those that were "positively injurious to the moral sense." He was convinced that his plan of placing a large amount of fiction or "books of amusement" in the library along with the "more important and elementary books" would "yield fruit by gaining the public's attention." Then with the habit of reading established, more serious and scholarly works would take their place. The book collection, classified according to the system worked out by William Frederick Poole at the Chicago Library,<sup>6</sup> was scholarly, leaning heavily toward English literature, religion and history. Several hundred French and German books were added to the collection for foreign-born immigrants and contributed substantially to the circulation in the next several years.<sup>7</sup> Upstairs in the reading room there were more than one hundred fifty periodicals and newspapers.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Evans, op. cit., p. 231.

<sup>5</sup>Kalish, op. cit., p. 66-7.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

<sup>7</sup>Evans, op. cit., p. 232.

<sup>8</sup>Kalish, op. cit., p. 67.

After Dr. Steiner's death in 1892, his son Bernard succeeded him as librarian and carried on the Steiner tradition. The second Steiner combined teaching in universities and researching and writing on historical subjects with administration of the Library. His articles and books relating to Maryland's history alone number almost ninety.<sup>9</sup> He had had no formal training or experience in library administration, was considered extremely conservative, and believed that "the library is the continuation school of the people."<sup>10</sup>

Steiner's efforts to provide only the best literature for the public caused some misunderstanding and resentment. When the Baltimore American accused him of taking books considered taboo off the shelves, he claimed that "a few writers of light novels" were excluded because "the material of the books would not stand the wear and strain of circulation." He felt also that it was his duty to "expel" books that he thought were "too morbid a character for circulation by a library of this kind."<sup>11</sup>

In order to provide Baltimore with library service comparable to cities of equal size, Steiner worked tirelessly. But "the greatest obstacle to development and expansion lay in the failure of the municipal authorities to provide adequate support for the Library." The city did increase the annual appropriation in 1920 to \$139,953 from \$59,203 in 1919, but this did not offset the years of

having the lowest appropriation percapita, the smallest staff, and the lowest salaries among large American city libraries. The appropriation for 1926, the year of Steiner's death was \$246,601, less than thirty cents percapita, and hardly more

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<sup>9</sup>Evans, op. cit., p. 232.

<sup>10</sup>Kalish, op. cit., p. 81.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 81-2.

than one-fourth the one dollar rate then accepted as essential for adequate public library support.<sup>12</sup>

Though appropriations were inadequate the Library did extend its services in a number of ways. It organized boy's and girl's clubs and women's clubs and used all the facilities available for distributing books. In 1904 there were 149 points for distribution of books, including public schools, private schools, reformatories, department stores, police stations, playgrounds and engine houses. Pratt Library also prepared the books that the State Library Commission sent out in 20 traveling libraries, and began distributing books for the blind that it had acquired a number of years before throughout the state.<sup>13</sup>

The need for special services was met in 1916 by the establishment of the Department of Natural Sciences and Useful Arts and the Children's Department, and in 1921 Fine Arts and Education Departments were opened.<sup>14</sup>

An appeal to Andrew Carnegie for funds to build branch libraries resulted in Carnegie's offer in 1906 of \$500,000 for 20 branch libraries in parts of Baltimore previously unreached by library services.<sup>15</sup>

Steiner brought the library to the attention of the public in a number of ways such as distributing 50,000 slips in the pay envelopes of mill workers and placing show cases in the Cathedral Street annex windows. These displays were developed around subjects ranging from needlework to football.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Evans, op. cit., p. 233.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 233-4.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 234.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

In the thirty-four years of Steiner's tenure, the number of volumes had increased by four times and the annual circulation had climbed to over 1,000,000. He had not reached the objective of having a branch library within walking distance of every resident of Baltimore, but there was progress in that in 1926 there were twenty-six branches compared to five in 1892.<sup>17</sup>

However, Pratt had many shortcomings and lacked the dynamic approach that would have greatly extended its services. Visiting that Library in 1920, one had

difficulty even finding the decrepit old building which was hidden away on Mulberry Street. H. L. Menckken pronounced the structure 'so infernally hideous that it ought to be pulled down by the common hangman,' adding that 'nothing more dreadful was built in Baltimore during the awful eighties.'

A book exhibit in one of the windows used books so old that they looked like they were advertising a second hand book shop.<sup>18</sup>

Catalog volumes were chained to stands to keep the public from taking them. There were no open shelves; a reader jotted down the call number, author, and title and took it to the delivery room where "slip chaseers" hunted down the book. Some were stored in remote, dark cellars and timid slip chaseers simply wrote "out" on the slips to avoid going down there. In the delivery room there were a few new current books, and one could request to look at one, possibly a second, but nobody could have a third chance. Steiner personally passed on each book acquired and discarded, received personal reports of branch libraries and their fines, disapproved of bobbed hair and economized on heat and light.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Kalish, op. cit., p. 118.

<sup>18</sup>Richard Hart, "Enoch Pratt Building Twenty Years Later--Staff Reactions," Library Journal, 78:11, May 15, 1953.

<sup>19</sup>Kalish, op. cit., p. 120.



The Library desperately needed a card catalog for the public to use, but when the attempt to classify the collection according to the Library of Congress was found to be slow and caused much confusion, a modification was devised. This unusual classification system was complicated and expensive and had to be changed years later at great expense.<sup>20</sup>

Reference services for Baltimore were so limited at Pratt Library that most researchers used the Peabody Institute and the Library of Congress instead of Pratt. In fact, Steiner informed Peabody that that was to be the function of the Institute rather than the function of Pratt.<sup>21</sup>

Following the death of Dr. Bernard Steiner in January of 1926, Joseph Lewis Wheeler, a graduate of the New York State Library School with much subsequent experience, was appointed director and the transformation of the Enoch Pratt Free Library began.

It was his good fortune to take office in the same year that the movement for a new library building got under way and to plan his reorganization in terms of modern quarters and equipment appropriate to his genius and to the needs of the city which he was called to serve.<sup>22</sup>

Almost immediately Wheeler had 10,000 of the best books pulled from the shelves and placed on open shelves in the delivery room. This eliminated the reader's searching the card catalog and much red tape in checking out a book. The number of books that could be taken out at one time was also increased.<sup>23</sup> Katherine Pitman no longer collated magazines but

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<sup>20</sup>Evans, op. cit., p. 232.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 234.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Kalish, op. cit., p. 136.

became children's librarian assigned to reading books and giving them to children. Glue pots, buckram, and sewing machine were discarded. A training class was established to furnish a supply of librarians who knew how to read and use all kinds of books.<sup>24</sup>

Wheeler was a superb publicity man and knew how to make a favorable impression on the public. He put the prettiest girls out where the public could see them. Sometimes he overdid it; it is said that "one girl was so beautiful it was actually dangerous to have her on public view."<sup>25</sup>

Expenses were reduced by shortening the hours of twelve branch libraries, assigning janitors to more than one branch, centralizing clerical work, buying supplies by competitive bidding and in bulk, and reorganizing the accounting system and clerical work.<sup>26</sup>

But while the library staff was doing twice the amount of work and circulation was doubling, the library budget increased by only very small amounts and Wheeler decided that the library had reached the limit of the services it could provide.<sup>27</sup>

Even during Bernard Steiner's time, the need for a new central building had been discussed; and now with increased use of, and interest in, the library and its services, a publicity campaign was launched. In 1927,

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<sup>24</sup>Margaret A. Edward, "For Auld Lang Syne, My Dears," Maryland Libraries, 27:13, Winter, 1961.

<sup>25</sup>Edwin Castagna, "Involvement in Federal Programs," Wilson Library Bulletin, 41: 482, January, 1967.

<sup>26</sup>Kalish, op. cit., p. 137.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid..

even before the loan was approved, librarians of several large U. S. cities had met at a special meeting at the Toronto ALA Conference to discuss the new library building and give advice and criticism. In 1928 the people of Baltimore voted for a \$3,000,000 loan to build on the city's Cathedral Street property. Additional area was needed, and it was 1930 before condemnation proceedings and a court suit were settled so that construction could begin. During that time much planning down to the smallest details had been going on.<sup>28</sup>

The depression had reached rock bottom in 1933 when the new library was opened to the public, and Baltimore city officials announced an \$85,000 cut in the library budget. The crisis was partially solved by employing relief workers under the Civil Works Administration project. Lack of money for entertainment, plus the fact that many were jobless, made the reading rooms of Pratt a favorite haunt. New interests in economics, education, religion, and home projects to stretch or increase incomes placed new demands on the library, all of which Wheeler and his staff endeavored to meet.<sup>29</sup>

All during the depression, the new building was admired for its charm, comfort, and convenience. It was an impressive structure built on four levels in what was described as "modified Italian Renaissance style." The entrance opened onto a central hall 100 feet in length that rose three stories high to the skylight and was decorated with murals and devices of famous printers and publishers. Around the central hall on the main floor

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<sup>28</sup>Kalish, op. cit., p. 141-2.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 148-9.

the Open Plan was carried out with subject department and their separate catalogs each having special housing. The lower level housed the stacks, and on the two upper levels were more subject departments, offices, reading rooms, periodical holdings, and an auditorium.<sup>30</sup>

All lending, returning, and registration of borrowers and the use of the public catalog was concentrated in the central hall. Readers passed from there to the service desk at the entrance of each of the seven subject departments, each of which had a staff to serve the public.<sup>31</sup>

The Pratt Library had been built at a cost of \$2,250,000 with a per cubic foot cost of \$.50. It could seat 1100 readers, had an open shelf collection of 120,000 volumes, and a storage capacity of 1,600,000 volumes.<sup>32</sup>

Needless to say, the building that received so much acclaim both in the U. S. and abroad in the thirties was not considered so convenient, comfortable, and charming a number of years later. In 1953, Joseph Wheeler described a number of the shortcomings. Exhibit windows should have been brought close to the sidewalk, lighting was unsatisfactory, bookcases were too permanent and flooring had not been continued, plexiglass screens were needed to cut down on noise, air conditioning was lacking, public meeting rooms did not have separate entrances for after hours meetings, parking facilities were inadequate, the popular library was not accessible enough,

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<sup>30</sup>Hart, "Enoch Pratt Building Twenty Years Later," p. 865.

<sup>31</sup>Pauline M. McCauley and Joseph M. Wheeler, "Baltimore's New Public Library Building," Library Journal, 58: 380, May 1, 1933.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 392.

conference space was needed, supervision and control were difficult, and more outlets and telephone extensions were needed.<sup>33</sup>

In spite of the lack of funds, Wheeler continued to add to the library and improve its services. In 1934, he created the Maryland Department and added to it over a thousand bound volumes of local newspapers found in a city hall attic and other out-of-the-way places. Staff members were assigned to travel over the state to find existing newspaper files. Steiner had not even subscribed to the current city newspapers and there were only six volumes of the Sun in 1926 when Wheeler took over at Pratt.<sup>34</sup>

Miss Kate Coplan had come to the library in 1924 and worked on exhibits for store windows. The exhibits of Miss Coplan and her staff displayed in the large showcase windows of the new library attracted more attention than ever before.<sup>35</sup>

The lack of funds during the 1930's caused Branch 10 to be closed, and the library to slip \$254,000 behind in book purchases. Wheeler contended that this shortage of books had caused decreases in circulation, and that an adequate supply of books and thirty more workers "would make it possible to lend the four or five million books that Baltimore would really like to use."<sup>36</sup>

The War Years saw the Library still operating on shoestring budgets with curtailed staff. It was difficult to keep up with the change of interests of the patrons during the war.

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<sup>33</sup>Joseph L. Wheeler, "Enoch Pratt Building Twenty Years Later--Planning Problems," Library Journal, 78: 869-70, May 15, 1953.

<sup>34</sup>Kalish, op. cit., p. 151.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 156.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 158 and 163.

When Wheeler retired in 1945, the book collection had increased from 484,042 volumes to 825,000, cardholders from 65,000 to 156,360, and circulation from 1,004,061 to 2,581,993 despite the lack of funds.<sup>37</sup>

For the next six and a half years, Emerson Greenaway, a librarian of considerable experience, was director of the Pratt Library.<sup>38</sup> Work with community groups became important with the shift in administrative emphasis to the educational purpose of the library when he became head in 1946.<sup>39</sup>

In 1947, a series of five lectures entitled "Atomic Energy: Force for Life or Chaos" was attended by 7,000 people and 100,000 copies of a booklist on atomic energy prepared by the staff were distributed. Another lecture series, "Behind the News" averaged attendance of 250 per meeting.<sup>40</sup> One of the most successful library adult education programs was the Pratt Library's series of Wednesday Noon-hour Book Talks begun in 1943 and continued under Greenaway. They were closely related to pressing issues of the time using well-informed speakers and discussion.<sup>41</sup> Another service was the assignment of several staff members to work with Protestant, Catholic and Jewish churches. They kept informed of denominational activities and supplied supplementary materials for mission study speakers, sent speakers

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<sup>37</sup>Kalish, p. 178.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 182.

<sup>39</sup>Emily W. Reed, "Working with Local Organizations--the Enoch Pratt Free Library," Library Trends, 17: 72, July, 1968.

<sup>40</sup>Kalish, op. cit., p. 184-5.

<sup>41</sup>John A. McCrossan, "Noon-hour Talks for Adults," ALA Bulletin, 63: 124, October, 1969.

to tell about new books and resources in the library, and kept as good a collection of denominational materials as the budget would allow.<sup>42</sup>

In 1949, a film department was created to acquire films "limited to adult educational value." A little later a record collection of classical music, speeches, foreign languages and the spoken word was begun. Book-mobile service was also begun with two tractors and trailers each carrying 5,000 books.<sup>43</sup>

A study of the branch library program revealed inadequate service, changes in population, and old, dingy buildings. Four were 60 years old and others were 30, 40, and 50 years old. The city council gave the go ahead on voting on a \$1,500,000 loan and in 1947 it passed. Surveys were made and plans begun for ten new branches.<sup>44</sup>

By 1951, Pratt had 383 full-time employees with 170 of these having professional library training. Under Greenaway a preprofessional training program for college graduates to have one year of training before going to library school was begun.<sup>45</sup>

Reorganization of the staff with a Director of Auxiliary Services, an Assistant Director of Public Services, and six divisions made the Library more efficient. In addition, three coordinators of work with adults, young people and children were to plan and guide in their areas

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<sup>42</sup>Julia L. Certain, "Groups Are Not Enough," Library Journal, 74: 1152-6, October, 1, 1949.

<sup>43</sup>Kalish, op. cit., p. 185-7.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 186-7.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 190.

and inform the director of new ideas and developments.<sup>46</sup> Two years was spent in this revamping and served to draw branches and central library more closely together in the realization of its objectives.<sup>47</sup> To facilitate financial record-keeping, a bookkeeping machine was purchased to keep more accurate and more complete records of accounts for all of the branch libraries.<sup>48</sup>

In 1951, Emerson Greenaway resigned abruptly to become director of the Free Library of Philadelphia. Under him library holdings had increased from 894,974 to 1,091,990 volumes. An editorial in the Sun said that "he was a fully satisfactory successor to Dr. Joseph L. Wheeler."<sup>49</sup>

Assistant director, Amy Winslow, was appointed Director of Pratt in 1951. Under her the Library continued to expand its services to the people of Baltimore.

In 1952, the second half of a \$3,000,000 loan was approved by the people of Baltimore after Miss Kate Coplan and her staff had organized an outstanding publicity campaign that included handbills, posters, newspaper notices, letters, and radio and pulpit announcements.<sup>50</sup> This loan made possible the construction of five new branch libraries, the remodeling of several others, two bookmobiles, and air conditioning for the central library.<sup>51</sup> In 1956 the State Legislature authorized a \$3,500,000 loan for Pratt, and

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<sup>46</sup>Emerson Greenaway, "No Library Department Is an Island--the Large Library," Library Journal, 76: 1666-72, October 15, 1951.

<sup>47</sup>Amy Winslow, "Enoch Pratt Reorganized," Library Journal, 75: 13-15, January 1, 1950.

<sup>48</sup>Esther Piercy, "Machines Keep Books," Library Journal, 76: 1012-13, June 15, 1951.

<sup>49</sup>Kalish, op. cit., p. 191.

<sup>50</sup>Kate Coplan, "Pratt Finishes the Job," Library Journal, 78: 403, March 1, 1953.

<sup>51</sup>"3,500,000 For Enoch Pratt," ALA Bulletin, 50: 699, December, 1956.



the people of Baltimore approved \$1,500,000 of this loan for seven more new branches, air conditioning units in a number of the branches, and relighting and drive-in service and parking at the central library.<sup>52</sup>

A number of other projects were undertaken during Miss Winslow's directorship. In 1951, to make seniors aware of what the public library had to offer after they left high school, the Young People's Department planned and set up a successful book carnival with booths and handcarts to stimulate interest in books on such things as art, humor, world affairs, careers and homemaking.<sup>53</sup> In 1953, library service was extended to the TB Wing of City Hospital.<sup>54</sup> In 1954, a series of thirteen half-hour programs entitled "Key to the Ages" was broadcast and the following year became a network feature on ABC. Other important series were "Bringing Up Baby" on child care and "Step Into Storyland," a program for children.<sup>55</sup>

Training sessions for giving book talks were set up for new assistants in the Young Adult Department and 600 forty-five minute talks were given at various places in one year in the schools of Baltimore.<sup>56</sup> A telephone reference desk was open in the General Reference Department, the first inventory in seventeen years was taken of the central library collection,<sup>57</sup> a book review pamphlet was assembled and distributed in the

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<sup>52</sup>"3,500,000 for Enoch Pratt", p. 699.

<sup>53</sup>Grace P. Slocum, "Pratt Has a Book Carnival," Library Journal, 76: 1890-2, November 15, 1951.

<sup>54</sup>Kalish, op. cit., p. 149.

<sup>55</sup>Richard Hart, "Library Broadcasting in Baltimore," Maryland Libraries, 24: 35-6, Winter, 1958.

<sup>56</sup>Margaret A. Edwards, "Many a Thousand Brick," Library Journal, 81: 1282-5, May 15, 1956.

<sup>57</sup>Edwin Castagna, "Seventy-five and Going Strong," Maryland Libraries, 27: 10, Winter, 1961.

branch libraries and schools each month,<sup>58</sup> and a smoking lounge was set up in the central library lobby.<sup>59</sup>

Microfilmed materials brought a "small revolution" in information storage. The "Early American Imprints," which contained the complete text of every book, pamphlet and broadside published in the U. S. from 1639 to 1819, were purchased on micro-cards.<sup>60</sup>

Over the years, Pratt Library had collected a large number of H. L. Mencken's private papers, books, articles, and reviews. Many had been given by the author and many others by close friends of Mencken. In 1956, these materials were assembled in a room on the third floor of the central library and opened to the public.<sup>61</sup> The collection contains all of Mencken's books in every edition, printing and translation, and some of the typescripts for these books with galleys and page proofs. In addition, there are complete sets of Smart Set and the American Mercury during Mencken's editorship and his scrapbooks of what was printed about himself.<sup>62</sup>

Miss Winslow retired in 1957 and the trustees selected Arthur H. Parsons to succeed her. After only two and a half years on the job, he died of a fatal heart attack in August of 1959. During those years he initiated a program of studies financed by the Deiches foundation to analyze the Baltimore libraries. In addition, several new branch libraries were opened and improvements were made at the central library.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>Kalish, op. cit., p. 203.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 205.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. 206.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 200.

<sup>62</sup>Betty Adler, "The Mencken Room," Maryland Libraries, 32: 11-13, Spring, 1966.

<sup>63</sup>Kalish, op. cit., p. 207.

Edwin Castagna, head of the Long Beach Public Library, was named director in 1960, a job he still holds in 1972. Pratt Library continued its extension of services and made a number of changes.

In 1960, the Pratt Board of Trustees and the Maryland Department of Education entered into a contract in which the Department of Education paid the Pratt Library \$64,523 to extend the privilege of borrowing circulating materials to the State of Maryland through authorized public libraries, state-supported hospitals, correctional institutions, and to individuals.<sup>64</sup>

Since 1920, the library had used a modified Library of Congress system of classification, but during the years, changes and substitutions had caused more problems than it solved. In 1965, the changing over of the 1,800,000 volumes to Library of Congress classification at an estimated cost of \$4,500,000 was begun.<sup>65</sup>

In 1963, the Pratt Library published the first of the Deiches studies, directed by Dr. Lowell Martin, on the amount and kind of use students were making of the Library. The survey revealed that almost two thirds of all library service to students came from Pratt. A committee made up of a principal, school librarian, department heads, subject supervisor and library specialist met with some of the Pratt staff and set up pilot classes in three schools. For these classes they developed teaching units, emphasized school library instruction, and arranged for use of the Pratt Library on school time to work on assignments. As a result,

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<sup>64</sup>"Contract," Maryland Libraries, 26: 2, Summer, 1960.

<sup>65</sup>Kalish, op. cit., p. 225.

communications with the schools improved and questionnaires indicated that students were more knowledgeable in using the library. To encourage further use, teacher orientation of Pratt Library was later included in workshop days in September.<sup>66</sup>

The City Council had suggested that Pratt maintain libraries in the public schools, but on the basis of the Deiches studies, Castagna recommended that local schools build up their own libraries and that student libraries be built at strategic points in the city.<sup>67</sup>

In 1961, the Children's Department planned and sponsored "Library Family Week." Families voted for books that they liked to read together and TV programs featuring a reading family and a panel of fathers discussing reading were broadcast locally.<sup>68</sup>

In 1965, the Pratt Library and the Community Action Commission signed a contract to carry out the "Library Services" as included in Baltimore's Community Action Program. Sixty-two thousand, one hundred forty-eight dollars was appropriated for the first year and \$182,400 for the following year. The target area was a slum in Southeast Baltimore, and in November of 1965, the first of twenty neighborhood centers was set up. These centers were staffed by twenty aides with three professional librarians administering all the centers. After the needs of the communities were determined, the process of selecting materials began. Volkswagen stationwagons stocked with paperbacks were sent out and the

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<sup>66</sup>Janet R. T. Stevens, "Pratt's Service to Students," Wilson Library Bulletin, 39: 383-8, January, 1965.

<sup>67</sup>Kalish, op. cit., p. 218.

<sup>68</sup>Children's Department, Enoch Pratt Free Library, "Library Family Week in Baltimore," Top of the News, 18: 53-5, December, 1961.

materials went out to eager patrons, many of whom did not return them. The centers were started with 1,000 hardcovers and paperbacks, magazines, and pamphlets for all ages, but with the bulk of the collection geared to children and teenagers. To provide activities and stimulate interest, educational games, story hours, and outdoor movies became a part of the program.<sup>69</sup>

Other activities connected with the Community Action Neighborhood Centers had to do with the elderly and sick. These included reading aloud visits, Talking Book Service, and a Nursing Home Project that provided weekly films, filmstrips, slides, records and book-sharing programs.<sup>70</sup>

A summer series of programs in 1966 was planned with the aid of teen-agers on such subjects as dope addiction, sex, religion, sports, and the draft. There was a negative reaction to the suggestion that these be book discussions, so speakers and films were used.<sup>71</sup>

Telephone service was greatly expanded in 1967. Six ten-station telephones provided direct access to a staff of two professional librarians and ten library aides who answered questions from a collection of over 900 reference works. In depth reference work questions went to subject departments for complete information with a return call made later to the patron.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>69</sup>Evelyn Levy, "Library Service in the Inner City," Wilson Library Bulletin, 41: 474-7, January 1967.

<sup>70</sup>Arthur S. Meyers, "The Unseen and Unheard Elderly," American Libraries, 2: 793-6, October, 1961.

<sup>71</sup>Anna Curry and Helen Harris, "Enrichment Summer Programs for Urban Young Adults," Top of the News, 23: 392-5, June, 1967.

<sup>72</sup>"The Month in Review," Wilson Library Bulletin, 42: 257, November, 1967.

In March of 1968, the first Book and Author Luncheon was held. With the cooperation of book stores, book departments of department stores, radio, and newspapers a publicity campaign called the attention of the public to this activity. Noted authors Leslie Ford, Gerald W. Johnson, Mari Sandoz, Clevelan Amory, and Bruce Catton spoke to large crowds.<sup>73</sup>

That same year Pratt discovered that 27,000 children had lost their privilege to use their cards because of library fines. All of these fines were canceled and no more fines were to be recorded.<sup>74</sup>

Because efforts to raise money to maintain and add to the George Peabody Institute Library had been unsuccessful, the trustees offered the collection to the Pratt Library. No appreciable additions had been made for fifty years. With the defeat of a suit filed by a Baltimore attorney to block the transfer of the \$3,500,000 collection, Pratt took over the 252,000 books, maps and folio prints, many of them rare and valuable items. Approximately \$1,000,000 was to be raised to rehabilitate the collection which was named the George Peabody Branch of the Pratt Library.<sup>75</sup>

In 1969, when each of its Community Action Centers received a grant for a summer program, Pratt hired twenty inner city teen-agers for eight weeks and placed them under four college students who were their program directors. Mornings were spent in discussion of the previous day's experiences, film viewing, reading, and current events; and afternoons

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<sup>73</sup>Kate M. Coplan, "Something Really Big," Library Journal, 83: 1489-91, May 15, 1968.

<sup>74</sup>"Enoch Pratt Cancels Children's Fines," ALA Bulletin, 62: 450, May, 1968.

<sup>75</sup>"Enoch Pratt Free Library Absorbs Peabody Institute," Library Journal, 95: 1270, April 1, 1970.

were spent working in a variety of library work situations in the city. Visits to cultural, educational, industrial, and library institutions were also included in the program.<sup>76</sup>

These are only a few of the many activities and services in which the Library has been involved in its efforts to meet educational and entertainments needs. In the seventy-six years of its existence, the Enoch Pratt Free Library service has grown from the circulation of a relatively small scholarly collection of books to a huge library system with all types of materials and an involvement in many programs and activities. It reaches out not only to the citizens of Baltimore, but also to individuals and institutions across the state of Maryland.

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<sup>76</sup>Arthur Meyers, "Pratt's Action Summer in Baltimore," Top of the News," 26: 273-81, April 1970.

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